

125 years of newspapers; plus new services for a new era

It is a milestone year for the Pelican Rapids Press—2022 is our 125th year of publication under the Press banner.

Our anniversary year has started with some exciting new endeavors, which places the hometown, lakes area newspaper in a great position for the coming century.

Digital advertising screens at area locations a new service

Many of our readers have seen the large screens at area establishments—with news briefs and ads, promoting businesses and events in the greater Pelican area.

The Press has partnered with Lakes Digital to offer special advertising programs at 12 screens throughout the region. Combined, the screens reach more than 20,000 people—all year long.

In the immediate Pelican area, the screens are located at the Pelican VFW, Taqueria Escobar, Rothsay Powerhouse, Hillbillies-Erhard, the Cornfield Cafe, and Cormorant Pub.

In addition, screens are located at Pit 611 and several establishments in the Detroit Lakes area: Hub41, Brygge Taps and Tastes, El Loro Restaurant, Tea Nail Spa, Nail Spa DL, and Anytime Fitness.

The response has been remarkable. For the Press, the Lakes Digital part-

nership has enabled the Press to offer new media to customers; attract more readers; and offer additional exposure for organizations. For example, Pheasants Forever, Duck's Unlimited, and numerous area businesses are reaching new audiences through this large-screen program.

Press among best-read publications in area

Meanwhile, the Pelican Press online website is reaching thousands of readers a week. The Press social media following tops 4,000.

And, our good old print newspaper — the publication that started it all 125 years ago — is the best-read weekly periodical in Otter Tail County. Based on recent Minnesota market and readership studies, the audience for the Press is more than 4,500 every week. Thanks to lake property owners and visitors, Press readership approaches 6,000 every week during the summer.

The challenges facing traditional newspapers have been widely publicized. But at the Press, we're pleased to report that we've been a lakes area tradition for 125 years. With the support of readers and advertisers, we intend to continue for decades to come.



Pelican Rapids Press: Delivering local news to Pelican lakes area for over a century

Milestone year for Press means more opportunities for customers, readers

From My VIEW POINT



by Louis Hoglund, Managing Editor



The Press launches its 125th year with continued growth in readership of the print newspaper as well as online.

Plus, the Press is offering new services through partnerships with Modulist and Lakes Digital. Large screens, with advertising and lakes area news briefs, are now placed at 12 locations in the Otter Tail-Becker County lakes area—providing new opportunities for advertisers.

One of the digital screens is pictured above.

For information on the Lakes Digital screens and the Pelican Press call representative Cindy Hensch, 218-863-1421.

From the pen of the mayor...

Getting the lead out... Pelican Hwy 59-108 project will uncover levels of lead piping

By Brent Frazier, mayor City of Pelican Rapids

Not all of us were born with the athletic ability to stride around the high school track with the grace of a Gazelle. That was certainly true for the author of this column, as he would often hear the voices of his coaches yelling, "Hey Frazier, pick up the pace and get the lead out!"

We all know that lead is realized as a heavy substance, but did you know that a pound of lead weighs the same as a pound of feathers?

Lead is a chemical element with the symbol of Pb with an atomic weight of 82. It is a soft but heavy metal that is denser than most common metals. In its pure form, it rarely occurs in nature but most commonly occurs as the mineral galena, a lead compound, and is sometimes found in other mineral forms.

Lead is widely used for automobile batteries, paint pigments, ammunition, lifting weights, lead crystal glass, radiation protection, and several years ago, it was used in pipe fittings and water service lines that extend from a water main to a home or business.

Exposure to high levels of lead may cause anemia, weakness, and kidney & brain

damage, with very high exposure causing death. It is very dangerous to pregnant women and can damage a developing baby's nervous system. Touching lead is not a problem, but the danger lies with breathing in or swallowing lead.

The water that is pumped from our city wells contains no trace levels of lead, so therefore, when lead is found in our water, it is acknowledged that the lead is in the water service lines and pipe fittings which are owned by the property owner.

In 1986, Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, prohibiting the use of lead in pipes, solder, or flux that were not 'lead free' in public water systems or plumbing in facilities providing water for human consumption, but allowed those already in the ground to remain in place.

It is estimated that there are between 9.7 to 12.8 million pipes that are, or may be, lead spread across all 50 states. Mind-boggling, correct?

Since the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970, it has been its responsibility to write, publish and enforce the laws of the lead limits in public drinking water.

Laws pertaining to the air we breathe have taken front and center stage compared to the lead regulations. The City of

Pelican Rapids is required to test the potable water at ten homes every three years and takes this situation very seriously.

Over the past several decades, the lead water service lines that have been exposed during construction and water line breakage have been replaced with copper.

Pelican currently, as it has done for several years, adds a chemical polymer, referred to as an Ortho Phosphate, to drinking water at the Water Treatment Plant.

The function of this polymer is to develop a coating on the inside of the water pipes, thus preventing any leaching of the lead, where present, into the water which is used and consumed by the public.

During the upcoming 2024 Pelican Complete Streets Project, all water service lines will be replaced on Highways 59 & 108 within the city limits. At this time, we do not know for certain if most are now lead water service lines, but it will be determined when the water service lines are exposed to the atmosphere.

On November 15, 2020, President Joe Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, which provides \$15 billion in loans and grants for lead water service line replacement, which Pelican will definitely

be seeking, as will tens of thousands of other cities.

Over the decades, new chemicals have been discovered in our nation's drinking water communities. The most recent chemical has been introduced as being labeled as PFAS. This is a larger, more complex, and expanding group of manufactured chemicals that are used to make everyday products and are of Perfluoroalkyl & Polyfluoroalkyl substances.

Thus far, the severity of PFAS are labeled as the "may lead to" variety while we know that lead, when consumed over a period of time, is dangerous.

So, in the last 48 years, why hasn't the focus of the EPA been to totally eliminate the lead in our drinking water instead of trying to chase down the newly discovered chemicals as they arise?

Most of us certainly do not know the objective. If you are concerned, please call your U.S. Senator or U.S. Congressman to voice your concern.

Well, right now, I was thinking of going for a short jog through the neighborhood, but then what I'll probably hear is, "Hey Frazier, pick up the pace and get the lead out!"

Post-World War II baseball revival launched in Pelican in 1947

100 years ago, March 9, 1922

• Gas Explosion

Last week Henry Hanson was quite badly burned by an explosion of gas. His left forearm received the largest burn, which gave him much pain but is now healing up nicely.

He was soldering a gasoline oil can which was empty, and both the covers were removed. Evidently, enough gas remained in the can to ignite and explode when a torch which Henry had in his hand came in contact with the gas. At any rate, there was a loud explosion with the above results.

• Silo Collapses

L. Lundhagen's concrete silo collapsed Monday, being completely destroyed. Fortunately, no one was hurt, and no other damage was done. One of the boys was in it only a few minutes before it fell and was only a short distance away when the crash came. If it had fallen toward the barn, a great deal of damage would have been done also.

The silo was built a few years ago, and the gravel used in it was of poor quality, and it cracked shortly after it was made. It has been disintegrating ever since until finally it was unable to withstand its own weight. Those who saw it said that it was broken into very small pieces.

75 years ago, March 6, 1947

• Farmers Interested in Fire Protection

Since the announcement of the ruling by the State Fire Marshall that the local fire department could not answer country fire calls, several farmers in the surrounding townships have started a movement which they hope will result in the purchase of a fire-fighting unit which would be stationed in the village and available to the several townships surrounding Pelican Rapids.

The Pelican Rapids fire department has been going out on country calls, but the new ruling, which states that where a village or city has only one booster pump, it cannot be taken out of the city, puts a stop to this practice and leaves the farmers without available fire fighting equipment.

The only solution to this problem, as these farmers see

it, is to interest the various townships adjacent to Pelican Rapids to join together in the purchase of suitable equipment which would be stationed in Pelican Rapids and manned by the local fire department members and used for country fire calls only.

The townships are holding their annual meetings next Tuesday, March 11, and an effort is being made to have the matter brought up at each township meeting so as to get the project underway as soon as possible.

• Baseball Team Organized Here

The interest in baseball in this community is being revived again after some years of inactivity. On Monday evening, a meeting was held in the village hall to talk over the advisability of organizing and discuss what can be done to further the interest in the national game.

There was a fairly good representation of ball fans present, and Barney Bowers was elected president, Chester Kohler, secretary-treasurer, and Walter Wenino, manager.

There are a number of young men in the village who are much interested in the sport and have signed up to play. Boys in the country who wish to join the team are asked to contact Barney Bowers or Walter Wenino.

The Junior Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the team and will give any assistance within its power to make the organization a success.

• The Village Light Plant

It takes at least five men to operate a light plant in a town the size of Pelican Rapids, a superintendent, three plant operators, and an extra man. Records of other towns show that on average, \$10,000.00 or more is paid in salary each year to these five families. The greatest share of this money is spent locally. Personal property tax, paid on the distribution system, comes back to the city and amounted to \$712.60 for the year 1945. All added together, only a small percentage of the amount spent for electric energy is returned to the city.

Important questions to answer are: What part of the money we spend for electric energy stays in town? What

Looking BACK



by Paul Gubrud, Columnist

will we have to show ten years from now for money spent for electric energy? Towns our size are making money, both on distribution and the generation of electric energy. With good management, other towns have found it possible either to cut energy rates or show a profit to the city, depending upon the goal they set themselves.

50 years ago, March 7, 1972

• Accident Damages Two Vehicles

A collision Wednesday morning extensively damaged two vehicles, village police reported.

A car driven by Dennis Gilbertson collided with a pick-up truck driven by Omar Johnson at the intersection of First Street SW and Great Northern Road. Damage to Johnson's truck was estimated at over \$500, and damage to the Gilbertson car was estimated by police to be over \$200.

25 years ago, March 12, 1997

• Laundromat Vending Machines Vandalized

A candy machine was vandalized, and lockbox contents were stolen in an incident at the Laundromat over the weekend.

According to the police investigation, access was gained to a backroom office by removing a panel. Missing from the office was the key to coin lockboxes as well as a quantity of coins.

Other thefts being investigated by police include the loss of a wallet containing \$200 apparently taken from a locker room at the high school. A search was conducted without success.

Reported to police Thursday was damage to the Larry's Super Market building on South Broadway. According to the incident report, a motorist drove over the sidewalk and damaged the west side of the building.

From the tire tracks and the height of the impact area, police think a pickup truck was involved.

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